REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS

OF THE

CONNECTICUT

RETREAT FOR THE INSANE.

MDCCCXL.

HARTFORD.

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OFFICERS

OF THE

CONNECTICUT RETREAT FOR THE INSANE FOR 1840.

Rt. Rev. THOMAS C. BROWNELL, *President.*
DAVID WATKINSON, *Vice President.*
JAMES WARD, *Treasurer.*
JAMES B. HOSMER, *Auditor.*
CHARLES SHELDON, *Secretary.*

Vice Presidents for life, by subscription of $200, *and upwards.*

*Oliver Wolcott.
Samuel Tudor.
David Watkinson.
William H. Imlay.
Thomas S. Williams.
Henry L. Ellsworth.
Charles Sigourney.
George Goodwin.
*Chauncey Deming.
William Robinson.
*Elias Perkins.
Joseph Battell.
Joshua Stow.
*Elijah Thompson.

Directors for life, by subscription of $100.

Daniel Wadsworth.
Ward Woodbridge.
Robert Watkinson.
*Elisha Shepard.
James H. Wells.
Daniel Buck.
Henry Hudson.
*David Porter.
Reuben Langdon.
*Oliver D. Cooke.
William W. Ellsworth.
Henry Seymour.
Elipiialet Averill.
Edward Watkinson.
*George Smith.
*Asahel Hathaway, Jr.
*Nehemiah Hubbard.
*Abigail Hubbard.
*Obadiah Brown.

* Deceased.

Directors chosen at the Annual Meeting.

James Ward.	Thomas C. Perkins.
Joseph Trumbull.	Roderick Terry.
George Sumner.	John Olmsted.
James B. Hosmer.	Cyprian Nichols.
John Butler.	Gaius Lyman.
Thomas H. Gallaudet.	Thomas Day.
Charles Sheldon.	John M. Niles.
Isaac D. Bull.	Amariah Brigham.
John L. Comstock.	Griffin Stedman.
Edward P. Terry.	William T. Lee.

State Commissioners.

His Excellency William W. Ellsworth.
J. T. Norton, Esq.
Leonard Hebard, Esq.

Visitors.

Dr. George Sumner.	Dr. William S. Pierson.
Dr. Eli Ives.	Dr. Edward P. Terry.
Dr. Thomas Miner.	Dr. Archibald Welch.

James H. Wells,
James Ward,
John Olmsted,
} *Managers.*

Visiting Committee of Ladies.

Mrs. T. C. Brownell.	Mrs. R. Watkinson.
Mrs. Henry Hudson.	Mrs. G. Sumner.
Mrs. Charles Sheldon.	Mrs. John Olmsted.

AMARIAH BRIGHAM, M. D. *Superintendent and Physician.*
Rev. THOMAS H. GALLAUDET, *Chaplain.*
JOEL F. ERVING, *Apothecary.*
VIRGIL CORNISH, *Steward.*
Mrs. CORNISH, *House-keeper.*
MARY SHELDON, *Matron.*

REPORT.

It is now sixteen years since the Connecticut Retreat was opened for the reception of patients. To the medical society we are indebted for its origin—to the enlightened charity of individuals for its establishment, and to the State at large, for sustaining it in the earlier periods of its existence.

It must be confessed, however, that the proposition to establish an asylum for the insane, in Connecticut, was at first coldly received. The utility of the scheme was questioned by some, and its necessity denied by others; for at that time, there were few kindred institutions in the country from which the inhabitants of this State could derive either benefit or experience. The number of patients, at first, was comparatively small—but when it was learnt that they were treated kindly—that they were exposed to no cruelties, and subjected to no unnecessary restraint—that their personal comfort was increased, and the prospect of their recovery

brightened, the Retreat became, in the estimation of the public, an instrument of great good.

From the reports of the physicians, it appears that on the first of April, 1840, one thousand patients had been admitted into the Retreat. About five hundred of these were laboring under some form of insanity of recent date, and brought to the institution with the expectation of benefit from the means employed for their recovery. Of this number, four hundred and fifty have been restored to reason and returned to their families, and to those stations of usefulness which they had occupied before their attack.

Of the five hundred cases of chronic insanity, a large number has been cured; many have left the institution much improved, and others remained, not for the purposes of medication, but because they were made more comfortable there than they could possibly have been at their own homes. Even of this latter class — the forlorn hope of the institution — there have been some happy recoveries occurring, two, five or ten years after the attack, and when all expectation of such relief had been obliterated from the minds of their relatives and guardians. Those who have witnessed these results, and those who have experienced these benefits, are among the warmest and best friends of the institution.

It has been a cardinal principle with the Directors from the first establishment of the Retreat, to provide with parental interest for the wants of its unfortunate inmates. They have aimed to place it in charge of men distinguished for their skill, humanity and integrity, and to require of them the unceasing exercise of these virtues.

The physician is nominated by a committee of the Medical Society, and approved by the Directors. He is the head of the institution — is responsible for its management — conducts the medical and moral treatment of the patients, and maintains a regular correspondence with their friends.

The importance of religious instruction, as part of the system of moral treatment of the insane, has not been overlooked. Those of the patients who are capable of joining in religious services, assemble every evening, when the chaplain reads a portion of the sacred scriptures and conducts the devotions of the family. On Sunday he preaches to the assembled household, and often, during the week, presents the truths of christianity and its consolations to those who are care-worn, anxious, and dejected. Much good has resulted from this practice, and great credit is due to the gentleman, who has, with uncommon discretion and sound judgment, performed this sacred duty.

A steward is appointed to make provision for the wants of the institution and of the patients, with the advice of the physician, and to perform whatever duties are appropriate to his station. It is his business also, under the direction of the Superintendent and Managers, to see that the buildings are kept in good repair — that the grounds are well cultivated, and that the quarterly dues for the board of the patients are collected. He is required, every month, to render to one of the Managers, a detailed statement of his receipts and expenditures.

The matron of the institution has usually been the wife of the steward. She is required to devote much time to the female patients and their attendants — to see that the former are furnished with whatever is necessary for their comfort, and that the latter are faithful and kind in the performance of their duties. The matron has also been required to superintend the domestic concerns of the household, and to see that the rooms, the beds, the clothing, and the food of the patients are never neglected. These multiplied duties were too much for one person to perform, and it was consequently determined to appoint a house-keeper, to take charge of the domestic concerns of the institution, and require the matron to devote her attention exclusively to the welfare of the female patients.

The early patrons of the Retreat were especially anxious to guard against every possible abuse. They directed that a committee of medical men should be chosen every year, authorized to visit the institution, to inspect its records, and inquire into its usages, with instructions, if they discovered any thing wrong, to report it. It is the business of this committee to visit the Retreat every month — to assure themselves that it is well conducted — that no abuses are tolerated — that the patients are treated with uniform kindness, and that no reasonable exertions are spared to promote their recovery. A committee of ladies is annually appointed, whose attention is mainly directed to the condition of the female patients. Their visits are always welcome, and their suggestions have been the source of important practical improvements.

By the Legislature of the State, three commissioners are appointed, who, as public visitors of the Retreat, are expected to see that its funds are judiciously expended, and that satisfactory regulations are adopted, for the reception and support of the patients. It must be no small gratification to those who have friends at the Retreat, to know that these precautions have been taken, to secure those friends from every aggression of harm, and that no exertions will be spared to restore them to the possession of a well balanced mind.

It has always been our endeavor to make the Retreat an eligible place of residence — to allow the patients every liberty consistent with their safety, and to subject them to no severe restraint. But in order to secure this desirable object, it is necessary to be provided with a competent number of attendants, who, by assiduity and vigilance, shall supply the place of bolts and keys. It is their business to walk or ride with the patients — to engage with them in their various schemes of recreation, and, if possible, to induce them to engage in some useful employment. The expense of supporting patients is materially increased by the plan to which we have alluded, but when it is remembered that it is attended with greater success — that it is more humane and more in accordance with the practice of the best asylums in the country, it will be admitted that no other, at least that no better course could be adopted.

The lowest charge for the support of patients at the Retreat, is two dollars per week; and on these terms, a limited number of recent cases has uniformly been received. It should be observed, however, that none are admitted on these terms unless they are inhabitants of this State, and have no property of their own which can be diverted to their support. Those who occupy the wings of the building, and are furnished with comfortable and well furnished

bed-rooms, adjoining a common parlor, where they spend much of their time, and are under the constant supervision of attendants, pay three dollars and fifty cents per week, if they belong to the State of Connecticut, and four dollars if from other States. Most of the patients are received on these conditions; some few, whose friends require for them a separate nurse, and accommodations in the large rooms of the building, pay for the wages and board of the attendant, and for their own board, fuel, &c., twelve dollars a week. From the reports of the Treasurer, it appears that the annual receipts for the support of these several classes of patients amounts to about sixteen thousand dollars, and that the expenditure equals at least that sum.

It has been our constant endeavor to provide with economy for the wants of the patients, and to charge them no more than is spent in their behalf. It would be unjust to the institution if its expenditures were permitted to exceed its receipts; and it would be no less so to the patients, if they were required to pay more than is actually expended for their good. It would be equally unjust to appropriate any portion of the funds of the Retreat to the charitable maintenance of poor patients, for in that case it would be necessary to charge others more than is expended for their exclusive benefit. We should tax misfortune to relieve penury, instead of

looking to the public for that aid, which, in this enlightened age of liberality, the public will cheerfully grant.

With these views, we presented the facts revealed to us by every year's experience, to the Legislature of the State, and solicited in behalf of the insane poor, some appropriation from its treasury. No such appropriation has yet been made; but the course which has been adopted for the benefit of the deaf, and the blind, may warrant the expectation that some degree of charity will be extended to the insane poor. From their own desolate abodes—from the work-houses and jails of the State—they called to us for assistance, and we appealed to the Legislature, their constituted guardians, for deliverance.

We have not referred to the delightful locality of the Retreat, and to the happy influence of the surrounding scenery upon the minds of the patients. The records of the establishment, indicating a greater degree of success than was anticipated by its early and ardent friends, are the trophies of its usefulness, and the basis of its claims to the confidence of the public.

During the past year, some difficulty arose among the domestic officers of the institution, which led to the resignation of the physician and steward. The extensive experience and mature wisdom of the

former, had served to extend the reputation of the Retreat, and his retirement was the occasion of much concern to its friends. To guard against a recurrence of the same evil, and to provide more satisfactorily for the wants of the patients, the physician was required to devote his time exclusively to them. We have no doubt but this arrangement will be eminently beneficial to the inmates of the house, and satisfactory to their friends.

At a late meeting of the Directors of the Retreat, Dr. Brigham, of this city, was elected Superintendent. His unblemished moral character — his professional industry — his acquirements and his manners, pre-eminently fit him for the station to which he has been chosen. We feel assured that his duties will be ably and faithfully performed — that his exertions will be crowned with success — that he will be an instrument of great good to the patients — a source of much consolation to their friends, and the means of extensive usefulness to the Retreat.

TABLE.

Showing the number of admissions, recoveries, and deaths, annually, from the opening of the Retreat, April 1st, 1824.

		Total number Admissions.	Total number cures.	Recent cases Admitted.	Total number Recent cases cured.	Total number Deaths.
Admitted	1824–5	44	10	12	6	1
	1825–6	33	16	16	13	1
	1826–7	37	24	23	22	0
	1827–8	40	27	25	22	4
	1828–9	42	26	20	19	2
	1829–0	51	28	25	23	0
	1830–1	53	32	25	23	1
	1831–2	80	46	42	38	6
	1832–3	68	37	30	28	4
	1833–4	72	43	33	32	3
	1834–5	72	36	36	28	6
	1835–6	73	42	35	29	6
	1836–7	91	55	60	48	6
	1837–8	67	42	41	35	10
	1838–9	94	49	61	45	8
	1839–0	84	50	53	40	2
		1001	563	537	451	60

ABSTRACT

OF ANNUAL EXPENDITURE, SINCE THE REPORT OF 1834—TO WIT, FOR THE YEARS ENDING

April 1st,	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.	1839.	1840.
Current expenses by the Steward, . .	7,300,00	10,615,98	15,900,00	15,350,00	15,533,33	16,634,26
Salaries, ...	2,289,44	2,221,00	2,559,94	2,084,00	2,418,50	3,245,64
Medicine, ...		540,19	348,64	266,81	278,34	1,040,44
Improvements, ...	974,13	1,211,86	481,99	172,92	458,18	1,006,34
For new buildings, ...				2,523,67	678,12	500,00
Wine, ...	187,58	151,76				80,25
Furniture, ...		1,058,55	141,60	98,88	211,29	139,50
Coal, ...	218,03	248,11	713,64	480,44	629,30	561,67
Monument at grave of Dr. Todd, . . .						157,00
Incidental, including Insurance, money refunded, &c.	321,62	136,22	94,63	60,00	185,00	27,88
Total expenditures each year, ...	11,290,80	16,183,67	20,240,44	21,036,72	20,392,06	23,392,98

PERMANENT FUND, consisting of notes secured by mortgage, and cash on hand May, 1835, $33,750,37.

PERMANENT FUND, consisting of notes secured by mortgage, and cash on hand May, 1840, $32,099,99.

TERMS OF ADMISSION TO THE RETREAT.

For patients belonging to this State to be accommodated in the wings, and who do not require a separate attendant, $3 50 per week.
For those with similar accommodations, belonging to other States, $4 per week.
For those who require a room in the centre building and a separate attendant, if of this State, $10 per week.
For the same if from other States, $12 per week.

No patient to be admitted for a shorter term than three months, and payment for that term to be made in advance.

For the admission of patients apply to either of the Managers.

At a meeting of the Directors of the Retreat for the Insane, on the 19th day of May, 1830:

Resolved, That the Managers of the Retreat be authorized to admit indigent lunatics being inhabitants of this State, whose disease has not exceeded six months, at two dollars per week — provided the number of such persons in the institution shall at no time exceed the number of ten. And provided also, that no individual shall remain in the institution upon the said terms over six months.

Resolved, That before any indigent lunatic shall receive the benefit of this charity, a certificate shall be lodged with the Managers, signed by a magistrate of the town in which said lunatic resides, stating that from the evidence he has in his possession, he is of opinion that said indigent lunatic does not own property to the amount of one hundred dollars; and that his disease has not exceeded the period of six months.

A true copy from record,

Attest, CHARLES SHELDON, *Secretary.*